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US Baking Seminar Sells Like Hotcakes

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Report Highlights:

The U.S. Healthy Baking Seminar organized by the Agricultural Trade Office (ATO) Taipei on November 17 was a great success and attracted 34 chefs. Corporate Pastry Chef John Hui, from Pebble Beach Resorts, created authentic U.S. baked delicacies that featured a wide variety of U.S. ingredients, including: cream cheese, milk, frozen/dried blueberries, raisins, barley flakes, potato flakes, and locally milled flour from U.S. wheat. In 2014, the United States exported nearly 990,000 metric tons (MT) of wheat to Taiwan, or roughly \$356 million. Approximately, 44% of locally milled flour is sent to the baked goods industry. As for other ingredients typically used in the baking industry (e.g., cheese, nuts, etc.), Post estimates the United States exported approximately \$70 million for the baking industry in Taiwan in 2015.

General Information:

The ATO Taipei, in conjunction with the Kaiping Culinary School, organized a U.S. Healthy Baking Seminar on November 17, with ingredient sponsorship from multiple U.S. producer groups, including: the California Milk Advisory Board, the Raisin Administrative Committee, the U.S. Grains Council, the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council, the U.S. Potato Board, and the U.S. Wheat Associates. The ATO Taipei invited Chef John Hui, who was visiting Taipei for his judging tasks on another USDA supported event, to share his knowledge and skills with Taiwan chefs. The seminar was structured with Chef Hui's baking demos on cheesecakes, bagels, health bars, and pulled-sugar. The seminar attracted 34 chefs, who were bakers, pastry chefs, and R&D staff from baked goods manufacturers.



Chef John Hui demonstrating how to roll dough to make bagels

During Chef Hui's four-hour long cooking demo, Taiwan chefs were allowed to observe how U.S. ingredients wielded their performances in various baked goods. For example, in one of the recipes for bagels, Chef Hui added potato flake into the dough, commenting it not only enriched flavor, but naturally absorbed the unwanted moisture. Chef Hui also used frozen blueberries to help bring out a more natural sweetness in cheesecakes. His artful performance of pulled sugar amazed Taiwan chefs and elevated the image of the U.S. baking industry as well.



The seminar attracted chefs from various mom-and-pop bakeries, hotel pastry shops, and R&D manufacturing groups.



Chef Hui's expertise in artistic sugar-pulling inspired chefs on their future cake decoration.

After the seminar, the ATO Taipei received many positive comments on the practical recipes and Chef Hui's professional cooking demos. At least six bakers tried the recipes and made their trial bagels, two of whom announced that they would launch the bagels soon, and one hotel pastry chef adopted the cheesecake recipe for their future buffet dessert table. In addition to launching the bagel salmon sandwich as a new breakfast menu option, the Viva Bakery also gained inspiration from blueberry's uses and will roll out two new items: blueberry muffins and blueberry brownies.